

Submitter: Bob Bruce  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB3101

Chair Neron and members of the House Committee on Education:

Please allow me to urge your strong support for HB 3101.

Like thousands of Oregonians, I worry constantly about the safety of our school students and staff at all levels. I worry because one of my daughters is an elementary school teacher in Albany. My daughter-in-law is a teacher's assistant in Beaverton. My granddaughter is a middle school teacher in Monroe and I have a grandson who frequently substitutes at the high school level in the Mid-Valley. I also have grandchildren at the elementary, high school, community and university levels in Oregon. Every day they leave home just moments away from another possible school related incident; something I never even considered happening in my lifetime as a student, educator and school administrator.

The evidence of being unprepared for another school tragedy – be it gun violence, potential earthquake, or devastating fire in an aged school building – is all around us. The potential to witness another school crisis exists daily in every city, town, and hamlet in our expansive state. So, we must do more to bring greater preparedness, safety and security to our schools.

HB 3101 offers a reasonable and prudent means of helping our schools and responders save time and, possibly lives, by using technology to alert police, fire and other emergency responders to active crisis events. By installing silent-alarm technology in our school buildings we can quickly and efficiently notify emergency responders of emerging incidents. That same technology can help to simultaneously alert all teachers and administrators of the incident so that they can discharge their responsibilities to students without having to worry that they first need to initiate calls for help.

New York, New Jersey and Florida have already taken legislative action to help their schools and teachers use such technology by enacting what is known as Alyssa's Law. And states like Nebraska, Arizona, Texas, Virginia and Georgia are poised to follow with similar legislation.

HB 3101 is a common sense legislative initiative. It can help Oregon do better in responding to crisis situations in all of our schools, public and private, urban and rural. And we owe it to our students, teachers and school staff to give them that support.

I respectfully urge you to support and enact HB 3101.